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- NEWS RELEASE -

BYSIEWICZ SAYS: STATE, VOTERS READY FOR ELECTION DAY

AFTER TWO YEARS OF PREPARATION, TABLE IS SET FOR TOMORROW'S HISTORIC
PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

Hartford: One day before Connecticut holds its first presidential election using new voting technology, Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz announced that she will once again deploy Election Day Rapid Response teams to towns and cities across the state in order to assist local election officials with any potential questions or problems that arise. The Secretary also reviewed steps her office has taken to ensure a smooth Election Day.

“Our Election Day Rapid Response teams will fan-out across Connecticut,” said Bysiewicz. “Having them out in the communities instead of behind their desks will allow us to immediately respond to questions and find solutions. I look forward to spearheading this effort, working with local election officials to ensure that all our hard work over the past two years pays off and that Connecticut is ready to vote on November 4th.”

Last year's municipal election was the first statewide election in which every city and town used optical scan voting machines.

The deployment of Election Day Rapid Response teams is just one facet of the Secretary of the State's strategy to help voters and local election officials with the transition and assist them in properly conducting their town's election.

Public Awareness: To ensure that voters know about the new voting machines before they arrive at the polls, Secretary Bysiewicz's office embarked on an ambitious voter education campaign which produced the following results:

- Television and radio spots aired across the state beginning October 6, 2008.
- More than 1 million bi-lingual newspapers inserts were distributed in papers across Connecticut.
- Pocket guides that explain how to use optical scan technology were mailed to more than 1 million households with a registered voter or voters.
- During the last 24 months, the Secretary of the State's office conducted more than 350 voting machine demonstrations at libraries, senior centers, town halls, and community meetings across Connecticut.
- More than 800 instructional videos showing how to use optical scan machines and the vote-by-phone system were distributed to all 169 municipalities.
- Secretary Bysiewicz taped public service announcements which have been broadcast on radio and TV stations.
- The Vote-Ez-CT.com website was launched in early October with almost 25,000 visits by prospective voters.

"Tomorrow, when Connecticut residents head to the polls they will be prepared to vote," said Bysiewicz. "This multimedia public awareness campaign is targeted at the nearly 60% of Connecticut residents that have not yet cast ballots using our new voting machines and will serve as a refresher for those who have already used them. The television and radio ads will educate voters on just how safe, simple, and secure it is to vote in Connecticut."

Training: For over a year, the Secretary of the State's office conducted mandatory optical scan voting machine training for poll workers, Registrars of Voters, moderators, and machine tenders for all towns new to the technology. In that time, the Secretary of the State's office offered over 250 training sessions in more than 30 regional training centers across the state. As of October 31, 2008 more than 5,000 election workers and 1,000 moderators – from 169 towns - had completed all required training.

Secretary Bysiewicz has also ordered towns to order enough ballots to accommodate a 110% voter turnout. The extra ballots will serve as backup for voters who spoil their ballots and request a new one.

Recruitment of Poll Workers: Secretary of the State Susan Bysiewicz recently announced that hundreds of new poll workers have completed training for the 2008 General Election and will be deployed in precincts throughout the state on Election Day. The largest group of new poll workers is at least 250 students trained at 6 colleges in a program led and organized through Secretary Bysiewicz's office.

Students at Housatonic Community College in Bridgeport, Capitol Community College in Hartford, the UConn School of Social Work in West Hartford, Manchester Community College, Middlesex Community College in Middletown, and Southern Connecticut State University in New Haven all participated in the poll worker training programs. With the

exception of Middlesex CC and SCSU, the training classes for student poll workers were all organized and led by local registrars in and the Secretary of the State's Office.

"I predict Connecticut voters will go to the polls to cast ballots in record numbers," said Bysiewicz. "We are ready and polling places will be staffed by well-trained poll workers. These workers will get a fantastic learning experience about how the democratic process works and will be helping to oversee its basic function – the vote."

Presidential Ballots: Presidential ballots will be available at town clerks' offices until 8:00 p.m. on Election Day to eligible Connecticut residents who are U.S. Citizens over the age of 18 and not registered to vote. Those wishing to vote by Presidential ballot on Election Day must provide identification which shows residency in that town and either a photo ID or a government document showing the person's signature. Anyone looking for a complete list of acceptable forms of identification can visit the website www.VOTE-EZ-CT.com for the information in English and Spanish. In the past two Presidential elections, use of the Presidential ballot has been quite popular in Connecticut. Secretary Bysiewicz cites figures showing that 33,000 voters used Presidential ballots on Election Day in 2000 while 34,000 residents voted by Presidential ballot in 2004.

"Connecticut is offering a special opportunity that allows eligible residents who are not registered to vote by Presidential ballot," said Bysiewicz. "This year has seen unprecedented interest in the electoral process, with the highest number of active registered voters in our state's history. Much of that interest has been driven by the Presidential campaign. I encourage anyone not registered to vote because they missed the deadline to make their voice heard and cast a vote for President of the United States."

Provisional Ballots: Secretary Bysiewicz has asked election officials across the state to be prepared to inform voters who believe they are registered and eligible to cast ballots, but are not on the official list, that provisional ballots are available. A voter's provisional ballot will be counted if it is later determined that the voter is indeed eligible to vote. To learn more about provisional ballots, voters are encouraged to visit www.Vote-EZ-CT.com and go to More Info.

Testing & Security: As directed by Secretary Bysiewicz, all Registrars of Voters in Connecticut's 169 towns have completed pre-election testing and security protocols for memory cards and optical scan machines used on Election Day. In addition, the University of Connecticut's VoTeR Center conducted a pre-election random audit of over 600 memory cards. A similar audit of memory cards will be done after the election as well.

Other security protocols include:

- Programmed memory cards and equipment are stored in a locked storage location, to which only the Registrars of Voters have keys.
- Cards and equipment remain in locked storage until removed, always by 2 election officials of different parties, for public pre election testing.
- At the conclusion of the public testing, memory cards are sealed with tamper-evident number seals into the 2 tabulators for each polling place. The tabulators are sealed in their cases, also by numbered tamper evident seals.

- All transportation is done under the supervision of either a police officer or 2 sworn election officials of different parties.
- On election morning, the moderator & both assistant Registrars check and record the integrity & number of each seal at every polling place.

Toll Free Number to Report Fraud or Irregularities: To ensure that the election is administered fairly in every city and town in Connecticut, Secretary Bysiewicz announced that a statewide toll-free telephone number will be available again for use by anyone who witnesses or experiences voting irregularities on Election Day. Partners in this effort include the United States Attorney's Office District of Connecticut, the Connecticut State Elections Enforcement Commission (SEEC), and the Connecticut Chief State's Attorney's Office.

The number – 1-866-733-2463 (1-866-SEEC-INFO) – will be staffed by the SEEC during polling hours on Election Day. Anyone with knowledge of election fraud or voting rights abuses is encouraged to call this number to report suspected violations. The SEEC staff will answer questions, advise on complaint procedures and, if necessary, request the assistance of other state criminal or federal law enforcement authorities in the investigation and, if appropriate, prosecution of the matter. The United States Attorney's Office and the Federal Bureau of Investigation will be in direct contact with the SEEC in order to investigate any complaints of electoral corruption or civil rights violations.

Upgrades to the Connecticut Voter Registration Database: Earlier in the year, Secretary Bysiewicz and the State Department of Information Technology established a team to upgrade the online Connecticut Voter Registration Database (CVR). As part of this successful effort, new routers were installed in every town hall and the system was tested to simulate more than 400 registrars using it at the same time. Bandwidth was expanded and the system's overall capacity was upgraded as well.

Recounts: Post election procedures are in place to ensure all votes are counted accurately. All close races (fewer than a 20 vote margin of victory or margin of victory of less than one half of one percent) receive a mandatory recount. 100% of the ballots will be reviewed by representatives of both parties. Those ballots that both sides agree are clearly marked will be fed through a new machine with a new memory card. Those ballots where the parties disagree as to the result are counted by hand by election officials in public.

Audit: The Connecticut General Assembly – initiated by Secretary Bysiewicz – has enacted one of the strictest audit statutes in the country, developed in close cooperation with the University of Connecticut. Under state statute, a hand audit is required of 10% of all polling places in all election and primaries.